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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/729,882	12/05/2003	Werner Kroninger	10808/116	9196

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EXAMINER

OSELE, MARK A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1734

DATE MAILED: 10/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/729,882

Applicant(s)

KRONINGER ET AL.

Examiner

Mark A. Osele

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 July 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 5-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-3, 5-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over De (U.S. Patent 6,470,946) in view of Buchwalter et al. (U.S. Patent Publication 2002/0078559) and Hiyamizu et al. (U.S. Patent 4,906,011). De shows the method of processing a semiconductor workpiece, 402, by adhering the workpiece with an adhesive, 404, to a porous work carrier, 406, (column 5, lines 46-51) having through holes, 428, thinning the workpiece (column 1, lines 26-31), and then applying solvent through the porous work carrier to dissolve the adhesive (column 5, lines 63-67; column 6, lines 24-30) and separate the workpiece from the carrier (column 6, lines 36-55). De is silent as to the exact adhesive used, but teaches that various adhesives including epoxy and tape are conventionally used to adhere a wafer to a carrier (column 1, lines 33-40). De fails to show the porous carrier to have interconnected pores.

Buchwalter et al. teaches the use of a porous carrier, 404, can be used with adhesive to hold semiconductor elements to the carrier. Buchwalter et al. further teaches that a fluid can penetrate the porous carrier to release the elements from the carrier (paragraph 0053). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the porous carrier of Buchwalter et al. with

interconnected pores as the carrier in the process of De because Buchwalter et al. teaches the similar construction and function of a porous carrier with interconnected pores to the porous carrier of De which does not have interconnected pores.

Hiyamizu et al. teaches that the depth of infiltration of adhesive into the pores of a porous vacuum chuck can be controlled by selecting parameters including the type and viscosity of the adhesive (column 3, lines 26-30). The choosing of an adhesive based upon its viscosity is a clear indication that the anticipated adhesives are in liquid form. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a liquid adhesive in the method of the references as combined because De suggests that liquid adhesives are conventionally used for holding a wafer to a carrier and Hiyamizu et al. shows that liquid adhesives are used to hold articles to porous vacuum chucks. It is further noted that liquid thermoplastic adhesives are hardened to attach two articles together. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to harden the adhesive of the references as combined to complete the adhesive bond between the porous vacuum chuck and the workpiece.

Regarding claim 5, De shows the instantly claimed features but fails to disclose of what material the porous carrier is made. It is well known that metal carriers for thinning wafers are conventional. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use any conventional material, such as metal for the carrier of De because these materials are conventionally used.

Regarding claims 12-13, Buchwalter et al. teaches that semiconductor devices can be held on a porous carrier by vacuum, adhesive, or both (paragraph 0053). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use vacuum in addition to the adhesive as it is applied to the carrier of De because Buchwalter et al. teaches that these can be used concurrently which would increase the holding strength of the carrier to the semiconductor wafer.

Regarding claim 15, De further shows that a positive pressure can be applied on a side of the work carrier remote from the carrier (column 7, lines 28-49).

Regarding claim 11, which is depends from apparatus claim 10, material worked upon limitations are not given patentable weight in an apparatus claim.

Regarding claims 16-23 the references as combined show the claimed limitations but fail to show the particular pore size and porosity. Hiyamizu et al. teaches that the porosity and pore size of a vacuum carrier is a result effective variable for such factors as adhesive infiltration (column 3, lines 26-39). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to design the carrier of the references as combined using routine optimization to determine the most effective pore size and porosity for the carrier for a given situation because Hiyamizu et al. teaches these variables to be situation specific.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed July 13, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants argue that Buchwalter et al. fails to show fluid penetration

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through a porous carrier to release elements. The examiner points to paragraph 0053 of Buchwalter et al., "...may include a vapor phase etch with...which may be introduced through the porous transfer plate." It is noted that gases and liquids both fall under the category of fluids and Buchwalter et al. clearly shows introducing a fluid through the porous carrier to release the workpieces.

Applicants also argue that none of the references suggest that a plurality of pores accommodates a portion of the liquefied solid. It is noted that Hiyamizu chooses an adhesive based upon its viscosity, which suggests that the adhesive is a liquid. Furthermore, Hiyamizu teaches that the pore size and porosity affect the adhesive infiltration. Clearly the pores accommodate a portion of the liquefied adhesive which is later hardened into a solid. Regarding applicants' argument that none of the prior art shows applying the adhesive as a solid which hardens, it is well known that liquid adhesives are hardened to achieve bonding between a holder and a workpiece.

Conclusion

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

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TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark A. Osele whose telephone number is 571-272-1235. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christopher Fiorilla can be reached on 571-272-1187. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



MARK A. OSELE
PRIMARY EXAMINER

October 2, 2006